

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 165004 POSS DUPE  
ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 HA-05 PA-01 INR-10 H-01  
NSC-05 CIAE-00 VO-05 CA-01 /058 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/SOV:SMBYRNES  
APPROVED BY EUR/SOV:WLUERS  
EUR/SOV:WSHINN

-----077629 290325Z /14-S

P 282352Z JUN 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 165004

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CGEN, SOPN, UR, SCUL

SUBJECT: SUMMOMS TO U.S. CORRESPONDENTS; PENTACOSTALISTS  
IN EMBASSY

REF: (A) MOSCOW 14897 (B) MOSCOW 14858 (C) MOSCOW 14889

1. IN MEETING WITH SOVIET EMBASSY DCM VASEV ON JUNE 28  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LUERS EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT  
COURT SUMMONS HANDED TO TWO U.S. CORRESPONDENTS (PIPER AND  
WHITNEY) ON JUNE 27 AND REQUESTED SOVIET ASSISTANCE IN RES-  
OLVING QUESTION OF PENTACOSTALISTS AT PRESENT IN THE EMBASSY.

2. LUERS REITERATED THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY THE SECRETARY  
TO AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN JUNE 27 OVER THE SLANDER CASE  
INVOLVING U.S. MOSCOW CORRESPONDENTS PIPER AND WHITNEY AND  
OUTLINED THE POTENTIALLY SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS OF THIS CASE  
FOR SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS. LUERS STRESSED THAT THIS  
INCIDENT, IF PUSHED BY THE SOVIETS, COULD PROVOKE REAL  
OUTRAGE IN THE U.S., PARTICULARLY AMONG THE PRESS. THE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 165004 POSS DUPE

AMERICAN PEOPLE, WHILE THEMSELVES OFTEN CRITICAL OF  
INDIVIDUAL NEWSMEN AND ARTICLES, ARE PROFOUNDLY COMMITTED  
TO THE RIGHT OF THE PRESS TO SPEAK OUT, AND CONSIDER IT ONE  
OF THE TREASURES OF OUR SOCIETY. THIS IS THE REASON THE  
PEOPLE AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL FIND THIS TRIAL VERY DISTURB-

ING. LUERS STATED ALSO THAT SOVIET MOTIVES SEEM

PARTICULARLY UNCLEAR AND HE SUGGESTED THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT MAY NOT BE FULLY AWARE OF THE RAMIFICATIONS OF ITS ACTIONS. FINALLY, HE REITERATED THE SUBSTANCE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT REMARKS ON OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS, STRESSING THAT THE ROOTS OF THESE TIES ARE STABLE AND SOLID BUT POINTING OUT THAT THE U.S. PUBLIC'S IMPRESSION OF THEM IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DISTORTED AND THAT INCIDENTS SUCH AS THIS ONE DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING HERE AND HENCE TO OUR RELATIONS.

3. VASEV DID NOT REPLY FORMALLY, STRESSING THROUGHOUT HIS COMMENTS THAT THE EMBASSY HAD AS YET NO INFORMATION FROM MOSCOW ON THIS CASE AND THAT HE COULD ONLY COMMENT ON THE BASIS OF WHAT HE HAD READ IN THE U.S. PRESS. HE THEN STATED THAT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE TWO U.S. NEWSMEN WERE BEING CHARGED WITH "LIBEL", ASSERTING THAT LEGAL DEFINITIONS OF THIS TERM DIFFERED BETWEEN OUR STATES. IN THIS REGARD, HE OFFERED THE OPINION THAT THE HELSINKI ACT WAS NOT A LICENSE TO LIBEL AND HE DREW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN AN EXPRESSION OF POLITICAL OPINION AND SLANDER, NOTING THAT CBS, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD CERTAINLY SUE A MEMBER OF THE PRESS WHO ACCUSED THAT NETWORK OF HAVING "FAKED" A BROADCAST.

4. IN RESPONSE, LUERS POINTED OUT AGAIN THAT THE TRYING OF THE CORRESPONDENTS WOULD HAVE A SERIOUS IMPACT ON U.S. CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 165004 POSS DUPE

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE CLIMATE OF OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS. TO THIS VASEV RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD BRING THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN. FINALLY, VASEV ASKED THAT THE CASE NOT BE DRAMATIZED, NOTING THAT THE CORRESPONDENTS HAVE NOT BEEN FOUND GUILTY.

5. LUERS ALSO RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE PENTACOSTALISTS WHO ENTERED THE EMBASSY JUNE 27 AND ARE SEEKING TO EMIGRATE. LUERS ADVISED VASEV THAT IT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PENTACOSTALISTS' MAJOR CONCERN IS TO BE REUNITED WITH THE 16 YEAR OLD BOY WHO DID NOT SUCCEED IN GAINING ENTRY TO THE EMBASSY. LUERS STATED THAT SOVIET AGREEMENT TO REUNITE THE BOY WITH THE GROUP WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN OUR EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THE PENTACOSTALISTS TO LEAVE THE EMBASSY.

6. VASEV REPLIED THAT THE US SEEMED TO BE MAKING REUNIFICATION A CONDITION OF U.S. EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THE PENTACOSTALISTS TO DEPART, A SUPPOSITION LUERS DENIED BY POINTING OUT THAT WE ONLY WISHED TO RESOLVE THE ENTIRE MATTER QUICKLY AND SATISFACTORILY. VASEV SEEMED TO ACCEPT

THIS BUT STATED THAT IT IS "ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN" THAT THE  
EMIGRATION ISSUE WILL NOT BE DECIDED WHILE THE GROUP IS  
IN THE EMBASSY. VASEV INDICATED HE WOULD REPORT U.S.  
REQUEST TO MOSCOW. VANCE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 jun 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978STATE165004  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** SMBYRNES  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780268-0607  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780610/aaaaaild.tel  
**Line Count:** 120  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** b207077c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ORIGIN EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 MOSCOW 14897, 78 MOSCOW 14858, 78 MOSCOW 14889  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 20 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2132488  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SUMMOMS TO U.S. CORRESPONDENTS; PENTACOSTALISTS IN EMBASSY  
**TAGS:** CGEN, SOPN, SCUL, UR, US, (WHITNEY, CRAIG), (PIPER, HAROLD)  
**To:** MOSCOW  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/b207077c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014